



# ARTICLE ALERT

Information Resource Center

January 2011

## America's Immigrants



The United States is often referred to as the “Great Melting Pot,” a metaphor that connotes the blending of many cultures, languages and religions to form a single national identity. But this metaphor fails to capture the

slow, complex and frequently turbulent process by which immigrants of diverse backgrounds and beliefs join U.S. society, even as they transform it.

Debate — even rancor — over immigration is neither new nor uncommon in U.S. history. Immigration is both an important part of our national identity and a source of social and political tension. Today, as during earlier periods of mass immigration to the United States, integrating newcomers into the American mainstream is a dynamic process that requires adaptation and change not only on the part of immigrants, but by receiving communities, public institutions and private entities.

Since their earliest days, cities like Los Angeles, New York and Chicago have received — indeed, have been built by — large influxes of immigrants. In recent years, thousands of smaller U.S. towns and cities have begun to experience the cultural transformation that comes with welcoming sizable proportions of immigrants into their populations. From the South to the Midwest and the West Coast, growing numbers of immigrants are settling in areas populated mostly by the descendants of 19th- and early 20th-century European immigrants, creating challenges and opportunities for newcomers and established residents alike.

This issue of eJournal USA from America.gov examines how long-time residents and newcomers are learning to understand one another and live peaceably together in three U.S. communities: Marshalltown, Iowa; Beaverton, Oregon; and Louisville, Kentucky.

This eJournal is accessible at <http://www.america.gov/publication/ejournal/immigration.html>

Additional resources:

- eJournal USA: Immigrants Joining the Mainstream  
<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0208.html>
- America.gov Feature: Immigrants-Revitalizing Small-Town America  
[http://www.america.gov/immigrants\\_rural\\_usa.html](http://www.america.gov/immigrants_rural_usa.html)
- Publications and websites on United States immigration  
<http://www.america.gov/st/peopleplace-english/2010/December/20101222125552yelhsa0.1606562.html#>

### ABOUT THE IRC

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) in Jakarta is a specialized Reference and Research Library. Its goal is to provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public about topics such as U.S. foreign policy, legislation, social issues, economics and trade. High speed Internet computers, printer and photo copier are provided at the IRC for library users.

Books, articles, and websites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessary reflect official U.S. Government policy.

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Copies of the articles listed in Article Alert are available from the Information Resource Center, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Jakarta. Should you wish to receive a photocopy of an article, please complete the ARTICLE ALERT REQUEST FORM (page 4) and return it to us. We will mail or fax the requested articles directly to you at no cost.

## STATE OF THE UNION: WINNING THE FUTURE

January 25, 2011- In his second State of the Union address, President Obama is expected to focus heavily on his domestic agenda, but will also outline his administration's foreign policy goals. How successful he will be in accomplishing his goals will depend in large part on how adroitly Obama can work with Congress and on how effectively he can bridge the partisan divide between Republicans and Democrats, something of which this president is keenly aware. In the 112th Congress, control of the House of Representatives has shifted to the Republican Party, while Democrats continue to hold a majority of the seats in the Senate. Available online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/state-of-the-union-2011>

## SPECIAL FEATURE:

### AMERICA RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY, JANUARY 16, 2011

1. Obama, Barack. **PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY 2011.** Whitehouse.gov.

Long before our Nation's independence, weary settlers sought refuge on our shores to escape religious persecution on other continents. Recognizing their strife and toil, it was the genius of America's forefathers to protect our freedom of religion, including the freedom to practice none at all. Many faiths are now practiced in our Nation's houses of worship, and that diversity is built upon a rich tradition of religious tolerance. On this day, we commemorate an early realization of our Nation's founding ideals: Virginia's 1786 Statute for Religious Freedom.

**GET IT NOW!**

#### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY INFO PACKAGE

Find out more articles, survey results, e-publications and books about Religious Freedom Day, The American Religious

Landscape, Religious Freedom Conditions in Indonesia and Religious in America at: <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/indonesia/313899/websites/ReligiousFreedomDay2011.pdf>

2. Campbell, David. **AMERICAN GRACE: HOW RELIGION DIVIDES AND UNITES US.** Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, January 2011.

The Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life held a press luncheon on Dec. 16, 2010 with political science professors David Campbell and John Green on the topic of how religion both divides and unites Americans. David was talked about both sides of American story -- some ways that religion does divide American society but then some other ways in which we are united by religion, or at the very least, united in spite of our religious differences. Essentially he was talked about a puzzle -- a puzzle that most Americans don't even recognize as puzzling because it reflects the very world in which they live and probably the only one with which they are familiar. Currently available at <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1847/how-religion-divides-and-unites-us-david-campbell-conversation-transcript>

## EDUCATION USA

3. Quanbeck, Emily. **A MATTER OF DEGREES: U.S. UNIVERSITIES ARE STILL ON TOP, BUT ASIA IS RISING.** The Atlantic Monthly, December 2010.

America's high schools may be struggling, but its institutions of higher learning remain the destinations of choice for college and postgraduate degree-seekers the world over—for now, at least. In the 2010–11

rankings of the world's universities by Times Higher Education in London, U.S. schools earned the top five slots (in order): Harvard, Cal Tech, MIT, Stanford, and Princeton. Of the top 20 schools, the United States held 15 slots, the United Kingdom three, and Switzerland and Canada one each. Currently available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/12/a-matter-of-degrees/8309/>

## GLOBAL ISSUE

4. Brown, Lester. **THE GREAT FOOD CRISIS OF 2011.** Foreign Policy Online edition, January 2011.

As the new year begins, the price of wheat is setting an all-time high in the United Kingdom. Food riots are spreading across Algeria. Russia is importing grain to sustain its cattle herds until spring grazing begins. India is wrestling with an 18-percent annual food inflation

rate, sparking protests. China is looking abroad for potentially massive quantities of wheat and corn. The Mexican government is buying corn futures to avoid unmanageable tortilla price rises. And on January 5, the U.N. Food and Agricultural organization announced that its food price index for December hit an all-time high. Currently available at [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/01/10/the\\_great\\_food\\_crisis\\_of\\_2011](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/01/10/the_great_food_crisis_of_2011)

## JOURNALISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

5. Shirky, Clay. **THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA: TECHNOLOGY, THE PUBLIC SPHERE, AND POLITICAL CHANGE**. Foreign Affairs, January/February 2011.

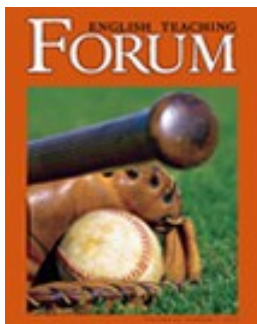
Clay Shirky is Professor of New Media at New York University and the author of *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*. The author writes about the political impact of social media has focused on the power of mass protests to topple governments. In fact, social media's real potential lies in supporting civil society and the public sphere -- which will produce change over years and decades, not weeks or months.

6. **NEW MEDIA, CITIZEN JOURNALISTS, AND BLOGGERS**. America.gov, December 2010

The freewheeling world of the blogosphere seems like the last bastion of truly free speech. One does not need a lot of money, an expensive printing press, or a transmitter tower. Anybody with access to a computer, a modem, and a little software can share his thoughts with the world through a weblog, or blog. And many of the intensely personal and highly opinionated weblogs proliferating on the Internet inhabit a world apart from the sometimes-dreary realm of meticulously sourced and fact-checked traditional journalism. Bloggers are a law unto themselves. Or are they? Available online at <http://www.america.gov/st/democracyhr-english/2010/November/20101124113412nayr0.1846669.html>

## U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

7. McIntosh, Phyllis. **BASEBALL: A NATIONAL TRADITION**. English Teaching Forum, Vol. 48, No. 3, 2010.



"As American as baseball and apple pie" is a phrase Americans use to describe any ultimate symbol of life and culture in the United States. Baseball, long dubbed the national pastime, is such a symbol. It is first and foremost a beloved game played at some level in virtually every American town, on dusty sandlots and in gleaming billion-dollar stadiums. But it is also a cultural phenomenon that has provided a host

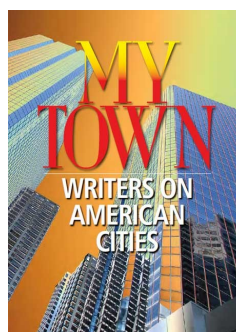
of colorful characters and cherished traditions. Most Americans can sing at least a few lines of the song "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Generations of children have collected baseball cards with players' pictures and statistics, the most valuable of which are now worth several million dollars. More than any other sport, baseball has reflected the best and worst of American society. Today, it also mirrors the nation's increasing diversity, as countries that have embraced America's favorite sport now send some of their best players to compete in the "big leagues" in the United States.

8. Gessen, Keith. **IN SEARCH OF LITERARY NEW YORK**. America.gov, December. 21. 2010.

Running away has always been the first and finest act in an American life. The country began when English religious fanatics ran away — to Boston. A century later, young Benjamin Franklin ran away from Boston to New York; unable to find work, he continued on to Philadelphia, which for the next century enjoyed what would turn out to be the height of its cultural prestige. In 1838, Frederic Douglass es-

caped from slavery and came to New York, but kept going, settling eventually in New Bedford, Massachusetts, at the time a prosperous port town. Some years later, in 1860, young William Dean Howells left Ohio for a pilgrimage to the literary greats — Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau — also in Boston, where he eventually became editor of the prestigious *Atlantic Monthly* and published the works of Henry James and Mark Twain. Eventually, though, in 1891, Howells ran away to New York, and everyone since then has run away to New York too. What are they looking for?

### New E-Publication



**eJournal USA: My Town: Writers on American Cities. November 2010.**

My Town: Writers on American Cities features 12 American authors describing how the U.S. cities where they live contribute to their creativity. Pete Hamill offers a touching reminiscence of growing

up in New York, Washington Post critic Jonathan Yardley introduces the reader to his hometown of Baltimore, and best-selling author Jonathan Kellerman describes "the sprawling, inchoate alternative-universe" that is Los Angeles. Also featured are portraits of Boston, Houston, Atlanta, Chicago, New Orleans, Memphis, Miami, and Washington D.C. Full online version is available at <http://www.america.gov/publications/books-content/>

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## Program Calendar February 2011

- Black History Month, February 2011: Movie Showing and Discussion on February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13, 2011
- All about Jazz: Jazz Workshop, February 19; Jazz Master Class, February 20; Pre-Java Jazz, February 24 & 25, 2011
- Photo-Contest: Jakarta Architecture on February 1-28, 2011
- Presentation on Entrepreneur, February 7, 2011
- Alumni Night with Ilham Habibie, February 22, 2011

For more details and program events please visit <http://www.atamerica.or.id/>

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Request for:

- ☐ 1. PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION
- ☐ 2. AMERICAN GRACE
- ☐ 3. A MATTER OF DEGREES
- ☐ 4. THE GREAT FOOD CRISIS OF 2011
- ☐ 5. THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA
- ☐ 6. NEW MEDIA, CITIZEN JOURNALISTS, AND BLOGGERS.
- ☐ 7. BASEBALL
- ☐ 8. IN SEARCH OF LITERARY NEW YORK

New E-Publications

- ☐ BECOMING AMERICAN: BEYOND THE MELTING POT
- ☐ MY TOWN: WRITERS ON AMERICAN CITIES
- ☐ STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS